

***SPECIAL JOINT MEETING
TIPPECANOE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
TIPPECANOE COUNTY COUNCIL
JANUARY 11, 2001***

The Tippecanoe County Commissioners and Tippecanoe County Council met in a special joint meeting on Thursday, January 11, 2001 at 10:00 A.M. in the Tippecanoe Room in the County Office Building. Commissioners present were: Vice President John L. Knochel, and Member KD Benson. Council members present were: President Jeffrey Kessler, Vice President David S. Byers, Margaret K. Bell, Ronald L. Fruitt, Jeffrey A. Kemper, and Kathy Vernon; Auditor Robert A. Plantenga, County Attorney David W. Luhman, and Secretary Pauline E. Rohr. (Councilmember Connie Basham was absent.)

President Kessler called the County Council meeting to order.

Vice President Knochel called the County Commissioners' meeting to order.

NON-CAPITAL GOALS

President Kessler announced that staffing needs is the first item on today's agenda for setting non-capital goals:

- Commission President Ruth E. Shedd and County Attorney Thomas H. Busch entered the meeting.

<u>Immediate Needs</u>	<u>2 – 3 Years</u>	<u>3 – 5 Years</u>
Area Plan (1)	Jail	Additional Court
Courts' Administrator (Sup. 3 &/or all)	Area Plan	Sheriff
Surveyor	Sheriff	Prosecutor
Parks	GIS & IS	
Juvenile Probation Officer	Additional Township Assessor(s)	
Parking Garage Attendant	Juvenile Detention	
GIS	Weights & Measures	
Extension Office	Coroner/Veterans Receptionist	
	Commissioners	
	Voter Registration & Election Board	

New positions approved in 2000:

- Clerk (1)
- Superior Court 6 (3) (new court)
- Parks (1)
- Treasurer (1)

CONSIDERATION: Individual Rate for Wildcat Solid Waste District

Auditor Plantenga said \$155,000.00 will be generated annually if the District requests a \$0.01 per \$100.00 of Tippecanoe County's assessed valuation. Since Clinton County also contributes to the District, he will have to investigate the amount of their assessed valuation to determine how much money they could generate.

Councilmember Kemper favors the pursuit of a tax rate for the District. He said the Council can supplement this amount at Budget time if it is insufficient to cover operating costs.

Auditor Plantenga said he will ask the State Tax Board if this tax rate will be outside our maximum levy For 2001, Tippecanoe County appropriated \$165,000 from its General Fund and Clinton County appropriated \$45,000.00 from its General Fund. He pointed out that the District will experience a general increase each year of approximately 5% from the amount raised by the \$0.01 because Tippecanoe County's assessed value increases approximately 5% per year.

Councilmember Vernon said the District should present a 3 – 5 year plan of expected uses for the money.

Attorney Luhman explained that the District can request a tax rate up to \$0.25 by resolution for approval by the County Councils of both Clinton and Tippecanoe by May 1, 2001 to be effective in 2002. Auditor Plantenga interjected that the State Board of Tax Commissioners might approve no tax rate for the District if they have a large cash balance. Commissioner Knochel said it was necessary for the District to maintain the approximate \$100,000 cash balance in order to apply for grants. In addition to appropriations by the two counties, they receive \$0.25 per ton from tipping fees at the Trash Transfer Station for their Education Fund.

CONSIDERATION: Individual Rate for Tippecanoe County Library Capital Needs

President Kessler said that representatives of the County Library will give a presentation on why they need a Capital Fund at the January 16th Council meeting. The Council will be asked to consider establishing a tax rate for this purpose.

Councilmember Kemper said this was voted down in 1994 because of insufficient advanced information and the Council didn't think the needs were critical.

Councilmember Bell asked if the joint venture library at Ivy Tech will relieve the load at the main branch. Councilmember Vernon said they expect it will because of the demographics of the southern portion of the County and the fact that it will be used by the general public as well as the students.

President Kessler said if the Council approves a tax rate, they will review it annually to determine if they want to change the rate or remove it. Auditor Plantenga confirmed that a tax rate will affect COIT and said some County General Fund dollars will be lost if a tax rate is set. He pointed out that a \$0.01 tax rate will not generate as much money for the Library as for the Solid Waste District because not all taxing entities are included in the County Library's district. He said he will provide the amount generated with a \$0.01 tax for Solid Waste and the Library.

FIBER OPTICS

Noting that both Lafayette and West Lafayette are providing right-of-way for contracted companies to lay fiber optic cable, President Kessler thinks the County should be pro-active and work with the cities to coordinate installation of fiber optic cable in appropriate areas of the County. Commissioners Benson and Knochel agreed that we need to coordinate road improvements with utilities, but Commissioner Benson doesn't want the County to be in the business of installing fiber optic cable.

President Kessler suggested appointing two representatives, one from the Council and one from the Commissioners, to meet with the Greater Lafayette Progress Committee for coordination of efforts.

PAY DOWN OF SUPERIOR COURT III DEBT

Auditor Plantenga proposed paying \$150,000.00 per year for 10 years to pay down the debt for Institutional Care. In order to accomplish this by 2010, he said the Council will need to over-appropriate by this amount each year. He suggested appropriating additional funds for 2001 to equal what the Judge expects to be billed to keep from falling behind in the first year of the plan. Since some members of the Council believe the County has been overcharged by some institutions, he suggested we might get a reduction if we can find someone at the State to verify this. County contacts to work on this are Councilmembers Kessler and Kemper and Auditor Plantenga.

OTHER

Councilmember Vernon thinks we need to look at cross training and utilizing County staff as well as possible. Citing the cooperation between the County and West Lafayette Parks Systems, she recommended investigating ways we can work with the cities and towns in the County to eliminate duplicate services.

Councilmember Fruitt thinks we should encourage revenue generating activities in various departments. Councilmember Byers said that local governments are going to have to agree on how revenue will be generated and spent if the Legislature approves Home Rule.

ADJOURNMENT

- Councilmember Byers moved to adjourn the Council, seconded by Councilmember Fruitt; motion carried.
- Commissioner Benson moved to adjourn the Commissioners, seconded by Commissioner Knochel; motion carried.

Robert A. Plantenga, Auditor

TIPPECANOE COUNTY COUNCIL

David S. Byers, President

Ronald L. Fruitt

Connie Basham, Vice President

Jeffrey A. Kemper

Margaret K. Bell

Jeffrey Kessler

Attest: _____
Robert A. Plantenga, Auditor

Kathy Vernon